

STATE SENATOR • MARTHA G. SCOTT • 2ND DISTRICT

Scott Press Release

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SENATE COMMITTEE TAKES UP SCOTT'S CONTRACEPTION EQUITY LEGISLATION

Scott: Women deserve equal coverage

LANSING—The Senate Health Policy Committee today took up a package of bills sponsored by Senators Martha G. Scott (D-Highland Park) and Beverly Hammerstrom (R-Temperance) which would extend equal prescription coverage benefits to women. Senate Bills 431 and 432 would expand access to birth control for thousands of women by requiring that health insurance policies that cover prescriptions include coverage for prescription contraceptives.

“This bill is about fair and equitable coverage for women,” said Sen. Martha G. Scott. “Birth control is necessary health care for women. In addition to allowing women to control when they have children, it’s used to manage an array of medical conditions, including painful menstrual cramps, endometriosis and acne.”

On average, women spend twenty percent of their income on out-of-pocket healthcare expenses, including prescription drugs and supplemental insurance, while men spend merely 12%. Additionally, many insurance companies have been cited by women’s health organizations for covering Viagra and other erectile dysfunction medications and not providing equitable coverage for female contraceptives.

“Legislation like ours does more than help women buy their birth control pills or get Depo-Provera injections,” said Sen. Scott. “It takes us one step closer to eliminating the health care disparities. We are addressing the needs of women that have been ignored for years.”

A study by the Alan Guttmacher Institute found that for every government dollar spent on contraceptive services, we save \$3 that would have otherwise been spent on pregnancy-related and newborn care through Medicaid. Without birth control, the average woman would become pregnant twelve times throughout her life, according to a peer-reviewed study published in *Family Planning Perspectives*. Of the 80% of women who bear children, surveys show that most aim to have two. A monthly supply of birth control pills averages almost \$500 per year.

“Preventing unwanted pregnancies is our number one goal,” said Sen. Scott. “But this makes sense financially, too. At a time when we face tough budget decisions and health care costs that are rapidly increasing, we need to look at some common sense solutions.”

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Senator Scott represents the 2nd Senate District, which includes areas of Detroit and the cities of Hamtramck, Harper Woods, Highland Park and all of the Grosse Pointes. She serves on the Senate Appropriations Committee.